2015-16 Flu Vaccination Challenge

Improving Flu Vaccination Rates at Michigan Colleges and Universities

MDHHS

DECEMBER 4, 2015

IN THIS ISSUE

Challenge Update

Challenge Leaders

As of December 3, 2015, the following schools in each category are leading the 2015-16 Flu Vaccination Challenge.

Small (10,000 or less students):
Calvin College followed closely by Hope College

Medium (10,001 to 25,000 students): Wayne State University

Large (25,001 or more students): University of Michigan

Leaders for each category are posted on a monthly basis via MDHHS social media (Facebook and Twitter) and on the Flu Challenge Webpage. We will do our best to tag your institutions in the posted messages.

Leaderboard Idea

It has been brought to our attention that schools are interested in knowing the Challenge leaders on a more regular basis. We currently list the frontrunner in each size category (S, M, L) on the Flu Challenge Webpage each month. Last year the Challenge ended in early December so we posted leader updates every other week. This year the Challenge extends through March.

A few things should be considered when determining what information to include in a leaderboard. First, we don't think including the actual number of surveys completed for each school would be a good idea, partly because those numbers don't correlate to the winning schools as undergraduate population size needs to be taken into account. Further, we don't want to publish the coverage data on a website because even our winners oftentimes still have very low coverage (e.g. 3%).

However, we want to create something that is useful for you and your administration! Keeping the above limitations in mind, please respond to Stefanie or Courtnay by Friday, December 18 with responses to the following questions:

1. How often would you like to see leaders announced?
2. Would you like to see a graphic representation of leaders (ex. bar graph without actual survey numbers or coverage levels included)?
3. Do you have any other ideas for how this leaderboard can be utilized?

Finding Credible Vaccine Information on the Web

Helping students to navigate through the plethora of information about vaccines available on the web can be tricky to do. Throughout this Challenge, many of you have been faced with pushback from students or faculty about the importance of flu vaccination, and have found yourselves in the situation of sorting out flu myths from flu facts. Below are some resources you may find helpful in your efforts to communicate accurate and trustworthy vaccine information to the public.

Finding Credible Vaccine Information on the Web

Before considering vaccine information on the Internet, check that the information comes from a credible source and is updated on a regular basis.

CDC's vaccines and immunization web content is researched, written and approved by subject matter experts, including physicians, researchers, epidemiologists, and analysts. Content is based on peer-reviewed science. CDC leadership makes the final decision on the words, images and links to best serve the information needs of the public as well as health care providers, public health professionals, partners, educators, and researchers. Science and public health data are frequently updated. Most pages are reviewed yearly.

- CDC's NCIRD is a member of the World Health Organization's (WHO) Vaccine Safety Net and follows web content and credibility criteria defined by the Global Advisory Committee on Vaccine Safety (GACVS).
- CDC's vaccines site is one of WHO's 20 English language certified web sites.
- As you surf for vaccine information, consider guidance from these sources:
- The American Academy of Pediatrics provides a list of items to consider when you're online.
- The Immunization Action Coalition suggests questions you should ask.
- The National Network for Immunization Information (NNII) suggests questions to ask when evaluating information.
- The University of California San Francisco's Evaluating Health Information page lists "Red Flags" every consumer needs to know.
- The Medical Library Association translates medical jargon (Medspeak) into language everyone can understand.

While it's a useful tool for researching health-related issues, the Internet does not replace a discussion with a healthcare professional.
This article was taken from: http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vac-gen/evalwebs.htm

Repeat Facts About the Flu

Rather than repeat the common myths and misconceptions that circulate during influenza season, try to make it a habit to repeat only the facts about the flu. CDC has developed a patient educational piece called, "No More Excuses: You Need a Flu Vaccine" that addresses many common misconceptions about flu vaccine with known facts.

Topics include:

- Even healthy people need a flu vaccine.
- Is the flu vaccine safe?
- The most common side effects of flu vaccines are mild.
- Even if I get sick, won't I recover quickly?
- Can't I wait and get vaccinated when/if flu hits my community?
- Flu vaccines can't give you the flu.
- Don't avoid getting a flu vaccine because you don't like shots.
- You need to get a flu vaccine every year.

Be sure to utilize this piece in your clinics to address the common questions that arise. A full page version of this poster is available at the end of this newsletter. CDC also maintains a list of frequently asked questions about flu disease and vaccination.

Flu Vaccine Safety

Flu vaccines are among the safest medical products in use. Hundreds of millions of Americans have safely received flu vaccines over the past 50 years, and there has been extensive research supporting the safety of flu vaccines.

Like any medical product, vaccines can cause side effects. Side effects of the flu vaccine are generally mild and go away on their own within a few days. Common side effects from the flu shot include: soreness, redness, and/or swelling from the shot; headache; fever; nausea; muscle aches; and fainting (mainly adolescents). Some studies have found a possible small association of injectable flu vaccine with Guillain-Barré syndrome (GBS). Overall, these studies estimated the risk for GBS after vaccination as fewer than 1 or 2 cases of GBS per one million people vaccinated. Other studies have not found any association. GBS also, rarely, occurs after flu illness. Even though GBS following flu illness is rare, GBS is more common following flu illness than following flu vaccination. GBS has not been associated with the nasal spray vaccine. Read more about flu vaccine safety.

Flu Vaccine Efficacy

How well the flu vaccine works (or its ability to prevent flu illness) can range widely from season to season. The vaccine's effectiveness also can vary depending on who is being vaccinated. At least two factors play an important role in determining the likelihood that flu vaccine will protect a person from flu illness: 1) characteristics of the person being vaccinated (such as their age and health), and 2) the similarity or "match" between the flu viruses the flu vaccine is designed to protect against and the flu viruses spreading in the community. During years when the flu vaccine is not well matched to circulating viruses, it's possible that no benefit from flu vaccination may be observed. During years when there is a good match between the flu vaccine and circulating viruses, it's possible to measure substantial benefits from vaccination in terms of preventing flu illness. However, even during years when the vaccine match is very good, the benefits of vaccination will vary across the population, depending on characteristics of the person being vaccinated and even, potentially, which vaccine was used.

Each season researchers try to determine how well flu vaccines work to regularly assess and confirm the value of flu vaccination as a public health intervention. Study results about how well a flu vaccine works can vary based on study design, outcome(s) measured, population studied and the season in which the flu vaccine was studied. These differences can make it difficult to compare one study's results with another's.

While determining how well a flu vaccine works is challenging, in general, recent studies have supported the conclusion that flu vaccination benefits public health, especially when the flu vaccine is well matched to circulating flu viruses. Read more about flu vaccine effectiveness.

A recent study indicates that getting vaccinated every year might not provide as much protection as people think. Still, experts urge people not to skip their vaccination. View the Today Show video here.

National Influenza Vaccination Week: December 6-12

Don't forget that National Influenza Vaccination Week (NIVW) will be held December 6–12. This event highlights the importance of continuing influenza vaccination throughout the season. CDC is featuring useful related resources on its NIVW web section, including fact sheets, a media toolkit, customizable posters and flyers, matte articles for print news stories, web buttons and banners, and much more.

In the U.S., flu season occurs in the fall and winter. The peak of flu season has occurred anywhere from late November through March.

Utilize the flu monthly posters developed by MDHHS to communicate the need for vaccination into the winter and spring months. MDHHS will be posting social media messages during NIVW so be sure to use and share those messages with your followers.

November Webinar Recap

Thanks to all who were able to participate in the November 10 campaign update webinar. Slides are available on the Flu Challenge webpage. The personal stories about vaccine-preventable diseases that were shared during the call can be downloaded and printed in poster format (scroll down to the bottom of the page). MDHHS has limited printed quantities available, so please contact Stefanie or Courtnay if you are interested in receiving printed copies.

January Webinar Announcement

Save-the-date for the next scheduled bi-monthly webinar on Thursday, January 21, 2016 at 12:00 p.m. EST. Topics to be discussed include: Flu Challenge progress update, flu surveillance update, and more!
http://breeze.mdch.train.org/immunize
Dial-in: 1-877-336-1828
Passcode: 2499503

RESOURCES

2015-16 Flu Challenge Webpage

College/University Flu Vaccination Toolkit

Sample social media messages

Flu Infographic for Young Adults

Flu Monthly Posters in English and Spanish

Vaccine-Preventable Disease – Personal Stories (scroll to bottom of page)

Mumps outbreaks at colleges in nearby states

Several states have reported college- or university-centered mumps outbreaks in the late summer and fall of 2015. These include campuses in Illinois, Iowa, Missouri, and Wisconsin. As of November 24, 2015, Michigan has not confirmed mumps activity.

Because of the increased amount of travel over the coming holiday season, local health departments and health care providers are advised to be watchful for possible mumps cases. Swelling and tenderness of one or more salivary glands is the common manifestation of mumps illness but may not be present in all cases. Non-specific prodrome symptoms may include low-grade fever, myalgia, malaise, headache, and anorexia. Pancreatitis, testicular inflammation in males, and ovarian inflammation in females are potential complications of mumps infection.

Suspect mumps cases should be evaluated by lab studies consisting of mumps PCR (buccal mucosa swab) and mumps IgM antibody (serum). Other recognized causes of parotid or other salivary gland swelling include influenza A, parainfluenza types 1 and 3, Epstein-Barr virus, Coxsackie A virus, and echovirus.

Mumps is a reportable disease in Michigan. Suspect, probable, and confirmed cases should be reported to the local health department serving the case's residence. Mumps is a vaccine-preventable disease; all children are recommended to be routinely vaccinated with 2 doses of mumps vaccine. Mumps vaccine is also recommended for adults born after 1957 if they lack immunity to mumps or are uncertain of mumps immunity.

Read more about mumps.

Michigan's Surveillance of Vaccine Preventable Diseases

- Key Facts about Measles - Updated 3/5/15
- Vaccine-Preventable Disease Investigation Guidelines
- Vaccine Preventable Diseases in Michigan - Annual Summaries

UPDATE FROM ALANA'S FOUNDATION

Need Help Spreading the Word about the Importance of Flu Vaccine?

Alana's Foundation (AF) has partnered with MDHHS on the 2015-16 Flu Vaccination Challenge and they are available to:

- Strategize on ways to make this campaign a success at your school
- Travel to health fairs and other on-campus events, as schedules permit

We shared participating schools' contact information with AF, so you may be hearing from them during this year's Challenge.

Vaccine Assistance Grants Available to Enrolled Schools

Vaccine assistance grants are available from AF to all schools enrolled in the 2015-16 Flu Vaccination Challenge. Currently, four schools have applied for and received grants.

Flu vaccine must be used on uninsured and underinsured students at no cost and no administration fee can be assessed. Acknowledgement and recognition that vaccines were provided from AF must be given in all press, promotions, signage, and flyers.

To apply for this grant opportunity, visit the grant request page or contact info@alanasfoundation.org.

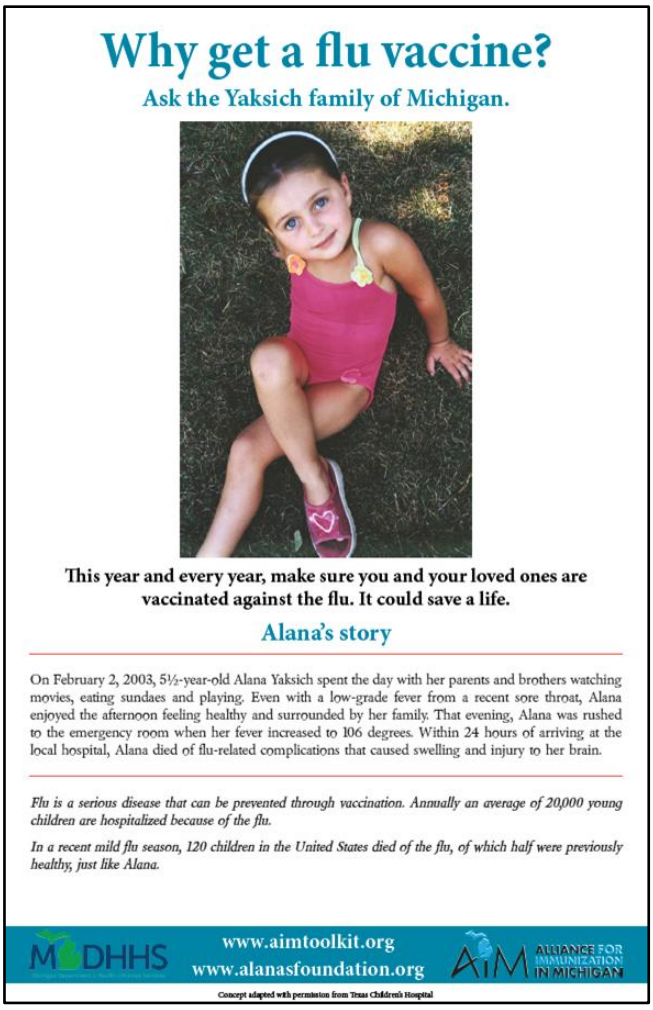
Other AF Updates

About Alana's Foundation - Video

Alana's Foundation In the News

Alana's Story

We know that personal stories resonate with people and we encourage you to utilize Michigan's stories.



To hear Alana's story, visit Alana's Foundation's website at http://www.alanasfoundation.org/.

The traveling Alana's Foundation trophy could be yours this year! Keep up the momentum of your campaign throughout the winter and spring months. Hold vaccination campaigns prior to spring break to protect students during their travels. Host competitions between various colleges and departments within your institution, and engage fraternities, sororities, and student life groups in the action. Post an internship for students who are interested in public health, health education, or health sciences to assist your health center; students are full of energy and enthusiasm and many would be thrilled to work with your health center for a semester on this fun, on-campus campaign.